

MARK BRICKMAN—A MAN IN THE KNOW

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, the transparency that makes our legal system the best in the world requires that the public have access to its proceedings, and a chance to view the record. Although often overlooked, the court reporter is an integral component of this system as he or she sits quietly in the courtroom diligently producing a transcript of the trial. In addition to their work in the courtroom, freelance court reporters are hired to work at depositions and to transcribe conversations between parties. I recently read about the extraordinary work of one court reporter named Mark Brickman, a constituent of mine from San Mateo, CA, and wanted to share his story with my colleagues.

Mark was born in San Francisco, but moved to Millbrae, CA as a teenager. A talented musician, he graduated from Mills High School and went on to San Francisco State University intent on pursuing his interest in music. At his parent's request he agreed to consider a more "typical" career and like many college students he explored multiple options before finding his calling as a court reporter.

Mr. Speaker, after passing the California State Court Reporters exam, Mark worked for a couple of different firms before his entrepreneurial spirit lead him to start his own firm Brickman Deposition Reporting in 1986. Like so many successful enterprises this company was started out of his house, before growing and now operating out of San Francisco. Mark's success has taken him across the country and around the globe. However, even more impressive is the fact that Mark is still able to make sure he is always around for his wife Cynthia, herself a court reporter, and their children. Although able to type over 100 words a minute, Mark is taking the time to write a book with advice for step-fathers.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mark Brickman, a professional court reporter and a terrific guy and to read more about him in the following article from the San Mateo Daily Journal.

A MAN IN THE KNOW

(By Heather Murtagh)

Mark Brickman isn't an ordinary reporter, but the man is in the know.

He can type fast. He knows a lot about many topics and he can keep a secret.

Brickman, 49, is one of thousands of court reporters paving their own way tailoring a job that fits their lifestyle. It wasn't the path Brickman believed he would end up on—music was his passion.

Brickman moved from San Francisco with his family to Millbrae when he was 13. He graduated from Mills High School in the early 1970s. Before leaving the school, Brickman made his mark in the music department. By playing the clarinet and saxophone, Brickman was able to partake in all things music around the campus. The musical love even brought him over to Europe for a class trip.

He began San Francisco State University wholeheartedly committed to studying music. At his parent's request he looked into studying a more lucrative area—like business. It was the first of many changes before

a neighbor introduced him to court reporting.

"It was right up my alley. I was always into words and I love politics and being social," he said.

Once he found the right career the motivation just hit Brickman. Since private school allowed him to focus on the court reporting rather than general education, Brickman was able to finish in two years—graduating in 1978. While in school Brickman worked as a typist for a court reporting firm. It took him two tries to pass the court reporting exam, but once he did his hard work paid off as he was offered a job.

There are two types of court reporters—actual court reporters and freelance reporters. Court reporters sit in the courtroom transcribing what is being said. Freelance reporters complete depositions, transcribe conversations and complete any paperwork outside of the courtroom. Brickman is primarily a freelance reporter but he dabbles in courtrooms from time to time—only for topics that interest him.

He produces hundreds of pages in a day, and it's not because of his typing skills. Brickman can type over 100 words per minute but court reporters use a different method of typing. The language is a special kind of shorthand, which sometimes consists of typing two letters simultaneously. To type the, for example, Brickman just presses "t," and the word if is the letters t and p pressed at the same time. It's a difficult language to master, said Brickman, but the work is worthwhile.

Brickman worked for a couple of firms before opening Brickman Deposition Reporting in 1986, the firm is currently in San Francisco but started in his bedroom in Foster City. It's the kind of job, which can be as consuming or low maintenance as a worker could want. Reporters are paid between \$4 to \$10 per page. Brickman's work has taken him to multiple states and as far as Tokyo. He's listened in on the personal information of Debbi Fields, the woman behind Mrs. Fields, and self-help guru Deepak Chopra.

Brickman loves being in the know of personal and political situations going on around the nation. The career, he said, is great for anyone needing flexibility in a work schedule. It's also something that requires lots of work, accuracy and studying to get right. Brickman had one professor who would read names and numbers out of the phone book for hours as they transcribed it—a task he hated at the time.

"I could kiss his forehead. Twenty-six years later and I still use those skills," he said.

Despite his busy schedule, Brickman still makes time to have a life. He lives in San Mateo with his wife of four years, Cynthia, and her 18-year-old daughter Erika. Cynthia has four children, two girls and two boys. Brickman adopted Beverlee, the older daughter, just a few months before he married Cynthia.

Brickman met Beverlee at a convention for court reporters, which they both are, when Brickman first started dating his wife. He instantly felt protective of her. When the idea to adopt her was brought up, Brickman never looked back.

Even with success in business Brickman said it's important to have a balance with family and an outside life. He spends much time with his wife and children. He'd love to help with a national election one day. When he has the chance he loves to write. In fact, he's currently working on a book detailing his experiences with mixing families and tips for stepfathers.

TRIBUTE TO GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF ARMENIA ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SOVIET UNION

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Republic of Armenia on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of their independence from the Soviet Union.

Since September 21, 1991, Armenia has faced the daunting challenge of building a modern free market economy on the crumbling foundations of Communism. In spite of the situation as they inherited it, Armenia's story has been one of increasing success against long odds. As a member of the World Trade Organization, and a country committed to privatizing their economy, Armenia has seen positive economic growth rates since 1995. While there remains much work to be done, I am confident that the people of Armenia, with their long history of triumph over adversity, will succeed again in making their country a beacon of hope in its troubled part of the world.

Throughout their history, the Armenian people have proven both their desire and determination to be free. I am proud to join my colleagues in acknowledging the anniversary of independence for the free government of the Armenian people who have been ruled by the Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Persian, Ottoman empires as well as the Soviet Union.

On this important occasion, I extend my congratulations to the people and government of Armenia.

ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY REMARKS

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 15th anniversary of the independence of Armenia. On this day in 1991, Armenia was finally given the opportunity for self-rule for the first time in centuries. After suffering under harsh rule of the Turks, who attempted to slaughter them, and then the Soviets, who imprisoned them and persecuted them for their Christian beliefs, Armenia is now heading for a bright future filled with liberty and economic growth.

After decades of stagnation under the failed communist economic system, Armenia now ranks as the 27th most economically free nation in the world. A member of the World Trade Organization, Armenia is working through the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to grow its economy. I have strong faith that Armenia will continue to grow despite the harsh embargoes of its neighbors in Georgia and Turkey.

Armenia is justifiably proud of its deep cultural roots that go back to the dawn of recorded civilization. Ninety-nine percent of Armenians are literate and they have preserved both a distinct language and alphabet. Located in the shadow of the famed Mt. Ararat,

Armenia's growing tourist industry prides itself on the nation's fascinating history.

Armenian-Americans are contributing to the development of their homeland by investing and promoting the nation on the international stage. Today is a great day for them and their homeland. I congratulate Armenia on 15 years of freedom and progress and trust that our nations will grow even closer in the future as we seek to promote liberty around the world.

ANOTHER NASA SUCCESS

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) successfully completed another space shuttle mission with this morning's landing of the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* and the completion of the STS-115 mission. Launched on September 9, STS-115 is the 116th space shuttle mission, and the first since 2002 to include work on assembling and expanding the International Space Station. The successful completion of the STS-115 mission puts the space station back on the road to completion.

The major accomplishments of the STS-115 mission include the delivery and installation of the massive P3/P4 truss—an integral part of the space station's backbone—and two sets of solar arrays that will eventually provide one quarter of the space station's power. The crew's other accomplishments include preparing an important radiator for later activation, installing a signal processor and transponder that transmit voice and data to the ground, and performing other tasks to upgrade and protect the space station's systems.

The STS-115 mission is the first time a procedure called "camp out" was implemented. A "camp out" is where astronauts sleep in the Quest airlock prior to their space walks. The process shortens the "prebreathe" time during which nitrogen is purged from the astronauts' systems and air pressure is lowered so the space walkers avoid the condition known as the bends. The "camp out" procedure enabled the astronauts to perform more than the number of scheduled activities on each of the mission's three space walks.

The *Atlantis*'s crew preformed unprecedented robotics work on this mission. The crew used the shuttle's arm in a delicate maneuver to hand off the school bus-sized truss to the space station's arm, and also moved the space station's robotic arm to a position where it will assist in the next phase of station construction. Perhaps most significantly, the *Atlantis* crew preformed the first full fly around of the space station since before the Space Shuttle *Columbia* accident. Thanks to the fly around, ground crews now have a better perspective on the space station's environment and overall exterior health.

Coming less than 2 months after the successful mission of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*, the *Atlantis* mission is another demonstration of the skills and dedication of all NASA personnel. I therefore urge all my colleagues join me in extending congratulations to NASA for the successful completion of the *Atlantis* mission. And extend a special thank you to *Atlantis*'s crew of Commander Brent

Jett, Mission Specialist Joe Tanner, Mission Specialist Steve MacLean, Pilot Chris Ferguson, Mission Specialist Dan Burbank, and Mission Specialist Heide Stefanyshyn-Piper, and the ground team that worked with the shuttle crew to make this mission a success.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF BETTY BUCK

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my congratulations today to my good friend and Fifth District constituent, Betty Buck of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, who was recently elected as the Chairman of the National Beer Wholesalers Association. Betty is well known for her leadership in the State of Maryland, and this week she made history by being elected the first woman to lead this important national business trade association.

Betty is the President of Buck Distributing, a beer wholesaler in my District, where she oversees a business with annual sales of more than \$40 million and employs more than 100 workers. This is not the first time that Betty's professional vision and competence have elevated her to a leadership position. She has been recognized for her business acumen by serving on the Committee of America's Women Business Leaders and as a past Director of the Greater Washington Board of Trade. In addition, she was named one of the Most Powerful Women in Washington in 1997, and was selected to be a member of the Top 500 Women Owned Business Group and the Top 25 Women Who Mean Business by the Washington Business Journal.

Betty is also a dedicated public servant who is deeply concerned about our community. She has served on numerous boards and foundations in the greater Washington, D.C., area, including the Prince George's Hospital Foundation, the University of Maryland's Foundation Board of Directors, and United Cerebral Palsy.

In addition to her charity work, Betty has also given her time and expertise to her community by serving as a member of the Maryland Judicial Compensation Committee, the Anne Arundel Planning Advisory Board, and the University of Maryland Commission for School Cooperation.

It is a testament to Betty's talents that she has accomplished so much in the professional world while also raising a wonderful family, including her children Kelly, Erin, Tim and Dan.

Mr. Speaker, Betty Buck is an inspiration to all those who desire a career in business and who also want to raise a family and be engaged in their community. I salute her efforts, as she rises to the position of Chairman of the National Beer Wholesalers Association.

CONGRATULATING SILVER STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON CELEBRATING 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEW ALBANY, INDIANA

HON. MICHAEL E. SODREL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. SODREL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a minute to recognize an elementary school in my district for a truly significant occasion. Silver Street Elementary School in New Albany, IN will celebrate its 90th Anniversary on September 11, 2006, and will welcome another class this year to continue its history of educating the youth of New Albany.

Silver Street Elementary first opened its doors in 1916. Since then, many generations have passed through its halls. The long history of Silver Street allows grandparents to watch their grandkids walk the same halls they once did years before.

Silver Street has continued to be an excellent education institution. Last month, the school received the first Exemplary Award from the State for improving each year in the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress test scores.

The philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau once wrote, "We are born weak, we need strength; helpless, we need aid; foolish, we need reason. All that we lack at birth, all that we need when we come to man's estate, is the gift of education." Silver Street Elementary has provided this gift for 90 years and the teachers, administrators and parents involved who provided this valuable service to the New Albany community should be commended.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize this fine elementary school that has educated many Hoosiers from Southern Indiana. It is an honor to have a historic building still being utilized for educational purposes in the district I represent. Congratulations to Silver Street Elementary for 90 years of success.

MILITARY PERSONNEL FINANCIAL SERVICES PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, as a supporter of ensuring our service personnel have access to a wide range of financial products I am concerned with the provision of the Military Personnel Financial Services Protection Act, S. 418, enacting a complete prohibition on so-called contractual or periodic payment mutual funds, which, according to testimony received by the House Committee on Financial Services, are sold voluntarily with full disclosure to officers at individual meetings held off base.

This is the first time in recent memory that this committee has ever proposed banning a product that is fully permissible under current law and that—again according to testimony received by the committee—is used by thousands of senior military officials to facilitate their financial security. Specifically, we were told that the clients of First Command Financial Planning, the Texas-based company principally involved in this market, has invested